

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
U.S. EMBASSY SOUTH AFRICA PUBLIC AFFAIRS SECTION  
Notice of Funding Opportunity**

<b>Program Office:</b>	Public Affairs Section, U.S. Consulate Cape Town
<b>Announcement Type:</b>	Request for Statements of Interest
<b>Funding Opportunity Title:</b>	Study in the United States Advising Network for South Africa
<b>Funding Opportunity Number:</b>	DOS-CPT-RSOI-202003
<b>Deadline for Applications:</b>	June 11, 2020
<b>CFDA Number:</b>	19.040 - Public Diplomacy Programs
<b>Total Amount Available:</b>	\$250,000
<b>Contact:</b>	capetowngrants@state.gov

Please note that the Consulate General cannot provide individual guidance or preliminary feedback on concept notes that may give or be construed to give any one applicant a distinct advantage over another in the application process. Please contact us at capetowngrants@state.gov if you wish to join the informational teleconference scheduled on May 19, 2020. Please include the word “Teleconference May 19” in your subject line.

#### **A. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

The U.S. Consulate General Cape Town’s Public Affairs Section (PAS Cape Town) of the U.S. Department of State announces a Request for Statements of Interest (RSOI) from organizations interested in applying for funding to create an expanded network of educational advisers around South Africa who can provide information and advice about applying for tertiary study in the United States.

PAS Cape Town invites organizations interested in potential funding to submit SOI applications outlining program concepts that reflect this goal. Please carefully follow all instructions below.

The submission of a Statement of Interest (SOI) is the first step in a two-part process. Applicants must first submit a SOI, which is a concise **concept note** (maximum 8 pages, plus a budget) that describes what makes your organization uniquely qualified to carry out this project, how you envision implementing the required activities described below, and how you would budget for these activities. Upon review of eligible SOIs, PAS Cape Town will invite selected applicants to expand their ideas into full proposal applications.

#### **Purpose:**

PAS Cape Town invites SOIs for a program to create a network of advisers around South Africa who can provide information and advice about applying for tertiary study in the United States. This program is intended to 1) promote interest in tertiary study in the United States, 2) provide access to quality advice about tertiary study in the United States, and 3) increase the number of students who apply and ultimately pursue tertiary studies in the United States.

#### **Background:**

EducationUSA is a U.S. Department of State network of over 430 international student advising centers in 178 countries and territories. The network promotes U.S. higher education to students around the world by offering accurate, comprehensive, and current information about opportunities to study at accredited postsecondary institutions in the United States.

In South Africa, there are only three EducationUSA Advisors: in Cape Town, Johannesburg, and Pretoria. Due to our limited capacity to promote and support interest in EducationUSA services in South Africa, PAS Cape Town seeks an implementing partner to create a network of outreach advisers to reach a wider audience, with a greater geographic spread.

The goal is to ensure that potentially qualifying students at top high school and tertiary institutions in South Africa – from the Vhembe District in the north to the Cape Metropole in the south, and everything in between – are aware of the opportunity to study in the United States, know who to contact about it, and receive timely, accurate, comprehensive, and current information. Whether they are a student who can afford to pay full tuition, or would rely entirely on financial aid, we aim to create a strong network of competent advisers who can help to demystify the process and ensure that competitive students know that studying in the United States is a realistic possibility.

**Priority Region:**

South Africa's major and regional cities, including for example: Polokwane, Kimberley, Bloemfontein, Mafikeng, Pretoria, Johannesburg, Durban, Pietermaritzburg, East London, Port Elizabeth, Makhanda, and Cape Town. We anticipate that advisers may not be located in each of these cities, but would like to ensure the presence of a dedicated adviser in close enough proximity to each city and district where there are high performing schools to avoid devoting too much of the budget to travel costs.

**Program Activities:**

In cooperation with PAS Cape Town and the EducationUSA Advising Office of the U.S. Mission to South Africa, the grantee will accomplish the goals stated in the Purpose (above) by rolling out, in stages over the course of two years, the following activities:

- A. Develop a system to define, recruit and hire outreach advisers spread geographically across South Africa in strategic locations (where there are high-performing schools), who have knowledge and experience of U.S. higher education and the application process, as well as knowledge of the South African basic and higher education system.
- B. Develop a communications and knowledge sharing platform to represent this network, and marketing tools to promote it.
- C. Arrange for training with the EducationUSA office (which is free of charge) and ongoing learning support to the outreach advisers, ensuring that they can provide the following services:
  1. Offer regular, in-person information sessions on higher education opportunities in the United States aimed at targeted high school and university students.
  2. Assist those interested in pursuing higher education in the United States on an individual and group basis, either in-person or virtually, with advice on preparation, school choice, admissions testing, essay writing, and financial aid options.

3. Provide pre-departure advice to students accepted to study at U.S. colleges or universities.
  4. Market their services across traditional and social media platforms to their target audiences.
- D. As necessary, work with admissions test companies to increase the number of admissions testing sites, enabling more prospective students easier access to tests.
- E. Develop a plan to gradually sustain this network of outreach advisers beyond the period of the grant, such as charging fees on a sliding scale for specific services.

PAS Cape Town is not prescribing the number of outreach advisers at this stage, nor the number of hours per week or month each adviser would work.

### **Participants and Audiences:**

We envision the network of outreach advisers will be made up of people spread across several major and regional South African cities who have knowledge and experience of the United States higher education sector and its application process, as well as familiarity with the South African education system. We welcome participation by alumni of U.S. government-funded exchange programs and alumni of U.S. higher education institutions.

### **Budget:**

We envision the budget will include all the costs of creating, supporting, and monitoring a network of outreach advisers, including office supplies, and their travel to attend training as well as to the schools and districts in their target area. The budget should also include costs to develop a website, and marketing tools to promote targeted awareness of this network. It may also include costs to partner with appropriate market research organizations and testing service companies. The budget should not provide for any costs that potential students might need to pay directly for such as testing or application fees. Applicants should also be aware that the EducationUSA Office does not charge a fee to provide training, and any travel to provide training to outreach advisers by EducationUSA or U.S. Mission staff would be funded separately.

### **Future Sustainability:**

We envision that once this network is set up and running, the grantee will gradually phase in a cost-share portion to support the operating costs. The goal for cost-sharing and eventual financial independence should be built into the project from the beginning. It is possible that a third year of partial funding may be discussed as an option year for the final award. See note on cost-sharing below.

## **B. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION**

Length of performance period: 2 years  
Number of awards anticipated: 1 award  
Total available funding: \$250,000  
Type of Funding: Fulbright-Hays funding  
Anticipated program start date: October 15, 2020

***This notice is subject to availability of funding. If this grant is funded, note that the final award amount may go up or down.***

**Funding Instrument Type:** Cooperative agreement or Grant.

PAS Cape Town and the EducationUSA Office will exercise significant involvement in the selection of outreach advisers and their training. We envision that the EducationUSA Office will develop an ongoing relationship and open communication line with the grantee and the outreach advisers to keep them informed of new opportunities and services in the EducationUSA Office.

**Competition Format and Timeline:** This announcement requests concept notes from qualified organizations. After a technical review and a merit review, concept notes that are determined to have met the criteria explained in this notice will be invited to submit full proposals. Additional guidance and detailed instructions will be provided in the request for a full proposal.

May 11 – Call for concept notes published

May 19 – Informational teleconference

June 11 – Concept note deadline

June 30 – Invitations for full proposals

July 30 – Full proposals due

September 15 – Notification of final selected proposal

**Program Performance Period:** Proposed programs should be completed in two years.

The Department of State will entertain applications for continuation grants funded under these awards beyond the initial budget period on a non-competitive basis subject to availability of funds, satisfactory progress of the program, and a determination that continued funding would be in the best interest of the U.S. Department of State.

## **C. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION**

PAS Cape Town encourages applications from U.S. and South African:

- Registered not-for-profit organizations, including think tanks and civil society/non-governmental organizations with programming experience
- Non-profit or governmental educational institutions
- Governmental institutions

For-profit or commercial entities are not eligible to apply.

Applicants should be able to demonstrate strong knowledge of the U.S. higher education system and the application process, as well as an understanding of the South African basic and higher education systems. In addition, applicants should have at least three years project management experience, as well as experience managing budgets, and monitoring and evaluation, which should be documented in the proposal.

### **Cost Sharing or Matching**

This project requires that at least 25% of the total cost be provided through cost-sharing.

### **Other Eligibility Requirements**

In order to be eligible to receive an award, all organizations must have a unique entity identifier (Data Universal Numbering System/DUNS number from Dun & Bradstreet), as well as a valid registration on [www.SAM.gov](http://www.SAM.gov). Registration in SAM will be required by applicants invited to submit a full proposal.

## **D. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION**

### **Application Package**

This Request for Statements of Interest (RSOI) and any amendments and supplementary information can be found at [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) (search by Opportunity Number).

### **Application Deadline**

June 11, 2020 (11:59pm South Africa time).

**Please follow all instructions below carefully.** Concept notes that do not meet the requirements of this announcement or fail to comply with the stated requirements will be ineligible for further consideration. Full proposals are not requested at this time.

### **Application Submission Process**

Applications should be submitted by email to [capetowngrants@state.gov](mailto:capetowngrants@state.gov). The Subject Line of your email must be: "DOS-CPT-RSOI-202003".

### **Technical Requirements**

Please send only two attachments in your email:

- The max 8 page concept note (either Word or PDF)
- The detailed budget narrative (either Excel or PDF)

Please ensure:

- All documents are in English
- All budgets are in U.S. dollars
- All pages are numbered
- All documents are formatted to A4 or 8 ½ x 11 paper, and
- All Microsoft Word documents are single-spaced, 12 point Times New Roman font, with a minimum of 1-inch margins.
- All attachments are named as: [Organization Name] [Concept OR Budget].
- Attached file sizes are under 5MB.
- Your proposal includes all of the required content listed below.

Documents submitted by portable hard drive or cloud-based file sharing services cannot be opened and will not be reviewed.

### **Content and Form of Application Submission**

Concept Notes should contain sufficient information so that anyone not familiar with the program would understand how the potential applicant would leverage its capacity and networks,

both in the U.S. and South Africa to advance the stated goals and objectives of this project. Concept notes should address the items below, in this order:

**Summary:** Short narrative that outlines how the applicant would implement the program, touching on all elements listed below. 2 pages maximum.

**Overview of the Organization Applying:** A description of past and present operations, showing ability to carry out the program, nation-wide ability to manage the program and logistics, financial management and controls, and a list of all previous grants from the U.S. Embassy and/or U.S. government agencies. 1 page maximum.

**Value Added:** A short description of the organization's overall value added to the program, in terms of concepts, linkages, participants, and stakeholders. What makes this organization the best fit for implementation of the program as described? How does this organization's participation enhance the existing plan? 1 page maximum.

**Key Personnel and Project Partners:** Names, titles, roles and experience/qualifications of key personnel involved in the program. What proportion of their time will be used in support of this program? If applicable, also list the names and type of involvement of any key partner organizations and sub-awardees. 1 page maximum.

**Target Audiences, Participants, and Locations:** a description of any specific groups or organizations, in line with those generally described in Section A above, which the applicant would propose to engage, and whether the applicant has any existing relationships or experience working with them. Address their geographic coverage. 1 page maximum.

**Timeline and Sustainability Plan:** The proposed timeline, steps, or stages for implementing the project activities, and how the applicant plans to gradually increase their cost-share portion as described in Section A to ensure future sustainability. 1 page maximum.

**Monitoring and Evaluation plan:** indicate how monitoring will be conducted and how success will be measured, listing milestones or key indicators. 1 page maximum

**Budget Estimate:** An estimate of expected costs over the two year period. See budget note in Section A above. You may use your own budget template, but the categories must conform to categories listed in Section H below.

## **E. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION**

A Grant Review Committee will review all eligible applications. The guiding principle in evaluating and rating each application is:

- Will the desired outcomes of the project be achieved?
- Are the goals and objectives well understood, and is the plan of action likely to succeed?
- How will success be measured?

Here are some of the factors the Grant Review Committee will consider when making this assessment:

**Organizational Capacity and Record on Previous Grants:** The organization has expertise in its stated field and has the internal controls in place to manage federal funds. This includes a financial management system and a bank account.

Applicants must demonstrate their capacity for:

- Project management
- Communication – written and oral
- Monitoring and evaluation processes
- Financial integrity
- Appropriate staffing
- Capacity to award sub-grants at a national level

**Program Planning/Ability to Achieve Objectives:** Goals and objectives are clearly stated and program approach is likely to provide maximum impact in achieving the proposed results.

**Budget:** The budget estimate is realistic and reasonable.

**Monitoring and Evaluation Plan:** Applicant demonstrates it is able to measure project success against key indicators.

**Sustainability Plan:** Applicant's plan to gradually make this project self-sustaining is realistic.

### **Federal Awardee Performance & Integrity Information System (FAPIIS)**

For any Federal award under a notice of funding opportunity, if the Federal awarding agency anticipates that the total Federal share will be greater than the simplified acquisition threshold on any Federal award under a notice of funding opportunity may include, over the period of performance (see §200.88 Simplified Acquisition Threshold), this section must also inform applicants:

- i. That the Federal awarding agency, prior to making a Federal award with a total amount of Federal share greater than the simplified acquisition threshold, is required to review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM (currently FAPIIS) (see 41 U.S.C. 2313);
- ii. That an applicant, at its option, may review information in the designated integrity and performance systems accessible through SAM and comment on any information about itself that a Federal awarding agency previously entered and is currently in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM;

iii. That the Federal awarding agency will consider any comments by the applicant, in addition to the other information in the designated integrity and performance system, in making a judgment about the applicant's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards when completing the review of risk posed by applicants as described in §200.205 Federal awarding agency review of risk posed by applicants.

## **F. FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION**

### **Federal Award Notices**

The grant award or cooperative agreement will be written, signed, awarded, and administered by the Grants Officer. The assistance award agreement is the authorizing document and it will be provided to the recipient for review and signature by email. The recipient may only start incurring program expenses beginning on the start date shown on the grant award document signed by the Grants Officer.

If a proposal is selected for funding, the Department of State has no obligation to provide any additional future funding. Renewal of an award to increase funding or extend the period of performance is at the discretion of the Department of State.

Issuance of this NOFO does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the U.S. government, nor does it commit the U.S. government to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of proposals. Further, the U.S. government reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received.

### **Administrative and National Policy Requirements**

**Terms and Conditions:** Before submitting an application, applicants should review all the terms and conditions and required certifications which will apply to this award, to ensure that they will be able to comply. These include: 2 CFR 200, 2 CFR 600, Certifications and Assurances, and the Department of State Standard Terms and Conditions, all of which are available at: <https://www.state.gov/about-us-office-of-the-procurement-executive/>.

**Reporting Requirements:** Recipients will be required to submit regular financial reports and narrative program reports. The award document will specify how often and in what format these reports must be submitted.

**Branding Requirements:** As a condition of receipt of a grant award, all materials produced pursuant to the award, including training materials, materials for recipients or materials to communicate or promote with foreign audiences a program, event, project, or some other activity under an agreement, including but not limited to invitations to events, press materials, and backdrops, podium signs, etc. must be marked appropriately with the relevant U.S. Embassy or Consulate branding in a size and prominence equal to (or greater than) any other logo or identity. **Note:** Exceptions to the branding requirement are allowable under certain conditions. If an



applicant is notified that their award has been chosen for funding, the Grants Officer will determine, in consultation with the applicant, if an exception is applicable.

## **G. FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACTS**

If you have any questions about the grant application process, please contact PAS Cape Town at: [capetowngrants@state.gov](mailto:capetowngrants@state.gov)

Note: We do not provide any individual pre-consultation for application related questions that are addressed in the NOFO. Once an application has been submitted, State Department officials and staff — both in the Department and at embassies or consulates overseas — may not discuss this competition with applicants until the entire proposal review process is completed.

## **H. OTHER INFORMATION**

### **Guidelines for Budget**

**Personnel and Fringe Benefits:** Describe the wages, salaries, and benefits of temporary or permanent staff who will be working directly for the applicant on the project, and the percentage of their time that will be spent on the project.

**Travel:** Estimate the costs of travel, accommodation, and per diem for this project, for both project staff, consultants or speakers, and participants/beneficiaries. If the project involves international travel, include a brief statement of justification for that travel. For international travel to and from the United States, note the Fly America Act regulations.

**Equipment:** Describe any machinery, furniture, or other personal property that is required for the project, which has a useful life of more than one year (or a life longer than the duration of the project), and costs at least \$5,000 per unit.

**Supplies:** List and describe all the items and materials, including any computer devices, that are needed for the project. If an item costs more than \$5,000 per unit, then put it in the budget under Equipment.

**Contractual:** Describe goods and services that the applicant plans to acquire through a contract with a vendor. Also describe any sub-awards to non-profit partners that will help carry out the project activities.

**Other Direct Costs:** Describe other costs directly associated with the project, which do not fit in the other categories. For example, shipping costs for materials and equipment or applicable taxes. All “Other” or “Miscellaneous” expenses must be itemized and explained.

**Indirect Costs:** These are costs that cannot be linked directly to the project activities, such as overhead costs needed to help keep the organization operating. If your organization has a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate (NICRA) and includes NICRA charges in the budget, attach a

copy of your latest NICRA. Organizations that have never had a NICRA may request indirect costs of 10% of the **modified** total direct costs as defined in 2 CFR 200.68.

**“Cost Sharing”** refers to contributions from the organization or other entities other than the U.S. Government. It also includes in-kind contributions such as volunteers’ time and donated venues.

**Alcoholic Beverages:** Please note that award funds cannot be used for alcoholic beverages.